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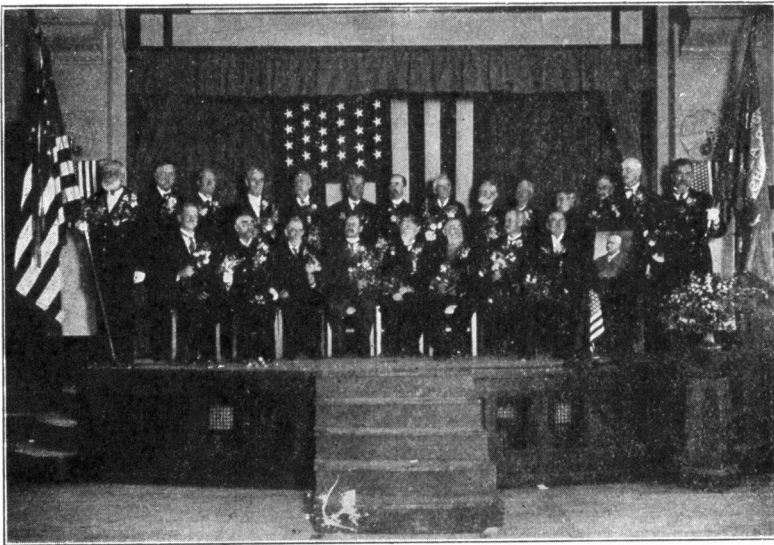
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MEMORIAL DAY IN THE FRANCIS W. PARKER SCHOOL

JOSEPH S. WRIGHT

Memorial Day is a day of joy for the small children as well as for the old survivors of the Civil War. For many years before our school was organized Colonel Parker's own G. A. R. Post, the George G. Meade Post, met with Colonel Parker at the Chicago Normal School, and since his death they have looked forward annually to being our guests on Memorial Day. Long before the cars carrying these soldiers are due to arrive, the eighth-grade boys are at the front door, proud to be their personal escort. When they arrive (each year in decreasing numbers), they are taken by their young escorts to the gymnasium for a short rest before the assembly. For years one of the mothers has thoughtfully furnished cigars, and they light up for a few puffs and a visit together.

Soon the first grade enters and walks in and around the old gentlemen without any attempt at formality. For the rest of the school the atmosphere is entirely different. The children are made to feel that the best way to show their respect and reverence toward the old soldiers is to pass in review before them, halt, salute in the most military manner possible, and pass on into the auditorium. With a really soldierly bearing each grade, with the grade teacher in the lead, marches across the



*Soldiers from the George G. Meade Post, Department Illinois
G. A. R. (to which Colonel Parker Belonged), Who
Took Part in the Exercise*

room. At the military command of another teacher, the line halts, faces toward the soldiers, and a military salute is given.

Following the salute by each grade, the old soldiers, their own post and American flag in the lead, march between rows of saluting children to the stage, after which the entire school, still standing, repeats in unison the Pledge to the Flag. Then the first grade, each one with a small bouquet, goes onto the stage and pins these mementoes on the breasts of their old friends. There is many an embrace and occasionally a tear as the little children go about among them.

MEMORIAL-DAY EXERCISES

FLORA J. COOKE

PROGRAM

Song. "Star Spangled Banner."

Principal. I hope that every one, even the youngest here, knows something of the purpose of Memorial Day—that day set apart to honor the heroes of the Civil War who gave their lives for their country. Because they were willing to settle a great question at the cost of life itself, the great unified nation of America is possible.

We should remember, not only on this day, but every day, that our nation owes its birth and its unity to a high democratic ideal; to a spirit of self-sacrifice. Only the preservation of that spirit can keep safe what has been so dearly won.

The responsibility for unselfish devotion and patriotism rests upon each one of us. We must be trained to understand what was gained by the Revolution and the Civil War.

True patriotism does not mean getting power, so that we may have the best for ourselves and our friends; it does not mean the securing of special privileges for the North, the South, the East or the West; it does not mean, even, the seeking to make America great at the expense of other nations. I believe it means that we should try to make America the symbol for justice and right dealing, for world-wide sympathies, for tolerance, for the principle underlying the universal brotherhood of man.

You may wonder why we select this day for our Memorial Day for Colonel Parker. It has become a custom not only because he was one of the Civil War heroes (seriously wounded and knowing the terrible cost and suffering of war), but more because he passionately desired that the School should teach the spirit of fellowship and understanding which would make war unnecessary. He believed there was a better way than war to settle differences.

Each Memorial Day at the old Normal School, he brought together all the old soldiers that he could muster, to impress upon us the full significance of the awful struggle which ended in 1865, and which he believed might have been averted if people had understood each other better—had been more considerate of the needs and rights of all.

Of these old soldiers few are now living, and we believe that we cannot honor them, living or dead, in any better way than by trying to teach the